

Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2010

Harpswell Town Office

Approved on June 17, 2010

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At 5:30 p.m. the Board met to handle administrative matters: the Board signed the annual Ratio & Declaration form regarding homesteads after reviewing it with Debbie Turner, Assessing Agent; the Board agreed to further discuss the concept of a private company using Town property for a well water testing event on the regular agenda; the Board reviewed a draft policy regarding the future use of the Orr's Island Bridge property and will further review it at a future meeting; the action list was reviewed and more information was requested on political signs, voting districts, local circuit breaker program and road postings; a workshop with staff and Planning Board members was scheduled to prioritize ordinance amendments; and purchase orders exceeding \$1,000 in value were reviewed and signed.

Selectmen Present: James S. Henderson, Mark E. Wallace and Elinor Multer

Staff Present: Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator; Terri Sawyer, Deputy Town Administrator; and Gina Perow, Recreation Director

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

The meeting was videotaped and broadcast live on Harpswell Community Television.

1. Adoption of the Agenda: Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to amend and adopt the agenda by adding two items under item 15: consider supporting water testing event and consider abandoned vessel action; motion passed 3-0.

2. Public Comment: Chairman Henderson reminded the public that comments are welcome for items not on the agenda but that defamatory comments about individuals are not permitted and complaints about Town staff members are not permissible as such complaints can be filed with the Board separately. Comments regarding policy or board members are permitted and the comment period is designed for about 5 minutes. For more than 5 minutes, one should request to be placed on the agenda. Anne Standridge, co-chair Friends for Harpswell Education, provided the Board with copies of a letter they sent to members of the SAD #75 Board of Directors and she read the letter.

3. Town Administrator's Report: Administrator Eiane announced the Cumberland County Charter Commission has issued a press release and a proposed Charter for Cumberland County. There is currently a comment period that will last until July 30, 2010, after which it will undergo final review and be presented to voters for the November 2, 2010 election date. A link will be created on the Town's website to the Charter Commission's website and Administrator Eiane encouraged the public to get involved. Administrator Eiane reported the Cumberland County Commissioners voted on May 10 to appoint a 7-member Board of Assessment Review to hear and decide tax abatement appeals. The Board is made up of 2 attorneys, 1 appraiser, 2 tax assessors, 1 real estate broker and 1 local businessman. This is a change from an appeal of a Harpswell decision that was previously heard by the three County Commissioners. Administrator Eiane noted that staff has been working on improvements to the Town's website, including adding an online service tab and asked for public feedback and ideas. Administrator Eiane stated June 8 is voting day for primaries, state referendum questions and MSAD 75 budget; sample ballots are online on the Town's website and one may vote absentee at the Clerk's Office through Monday. On Tuesday, voting will be held at 3 locations from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm at the Orr's Island School House, Merriconeag Grange and Cundy's Harbor Community Building.

4. Selectmen's Announcements: Chairman Henderson announced the Board will consider performing research to see if a public easement has been acquired to Cedar Beach, including access.. Chairman Henderson reviewed the elements of a public easement. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer for the Town to conduct research on the historic use of access to Cedar Beach for purposes to determine if a public

easement exists; motion passed 3-0. Chairman Henderson encouraged the public to submit any available information regarding past use of the Beach and access to it.

5. Consent Agenda: 1) Approval of the Minutes: The Board unanimously approved the minutes. **2) Orr's Island Bridge Lease Agreement:** Chairman Henderson expressed concern about George Morgan having James Morgan sign the lease as James has not been a name on the lease in the past, and it is against Town policy to add a name. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer to sign the proposed Addendum to the lease with George Morgan only; motion passed 3-0.

6. Recreation Update

- **Yoga at Mitchell Field:** Gina Perow, Recreation Director, proposed a new recreational program – family yoga at Mitchell Field to be held for one hour, one day a week through July and August. The proposal is similar to other recreation programs with independent contractors, the main difference being the location at Mitchell Field. Administrator Eiane stated the Group Use Policy for Mitchell Field shouldn't apply as this is a Town recreation program. Selectman Multer moved, seconded by Chairman Henderson to allow use of Mitchell Field by recreation programs without requiring Board approval; motion passed 3-0.
- **Maine Bike Rally:** Tony Barrett, Recreation Committee member, announced the Bike Rally is coming to Brunswick for the first time during July 9 to July 11, attracting bicyclists from all over New England and Canada. As part of the Rally there will be three rides in Harpswell and Mr. Barrett reviewed the details of the Artisan Ride. Mr. Barrett stated the public can register online at mainebikerrally.org. Chairman Henderson asked what precautions are being taken to protect the bikers on the narrow roads in Harpswell; Mr. Barrett responded that variable flash message signs may be used at the Town line.
- **Harpswell Hiking Challenge:** Mr. Barrett announced that Saturday is National Trails Day and Harpswell is encouraging hiking on public access property with a hiking challenge. The challenge is to complete 5 waterfront town-owned trails totaling 6.5 miles on Saturday between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mr. Barrett encouraged the public to participate for one or all of the walks and anyone who completes them all will be recognized. There will be tables set up in the Town Office parking lot with helpful information.

7. Recycling Center/Transfer Station Matters

- **Request for Proposals to Repair/Replace Cinder Block Wall:** Administrator Eiane stated that there is a block wall at the Recycling Center, with cracks, that has created concern about the integrity of the wall. The Town engineer reviewed the wall and made certain recommendations. Recent discussions have included removing the wall or repairing it. The Recycling Center Manager has prepared this request for proposals that includes both options of removal and repair. Chairman Henderson suggested a few changes to the wording. Selectman Multer moved, seconded by Chairman Henderson to authorize the RFP; motion passed 2-0 (Selectman Wallace abstained).
- **Request to Advertise for Part-Time Position:** Administrator Eiane stated this request is from the Recycling Center Manager to hire a part time employee from July 6 to September 15 for three days a week at an estimated cost of \$1,984. The 2010 approved budget included \$2,500 for this part time help line item. If the Board approves the request, the position will be advertised and brought back to the Board with a hire recommendation. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer to approve the request for part time seasonal help; motion passed 2-0 (Selectman Wallace abstained).
- **Consider Waiving Transfer Station Fees for Fire Debris Clean-up:** Administrator Eiane asked the Board to pass over this item as the Town received information that it cannot accept this type material and will instead pass on alternatives to the requester.

8. Maine Forest Service Update Re: Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Infestation: Allison Kanoti, Maine Forest Entomologist, announced that a Hemlock Woolly Adelgid infestation has been detected in Cundy's Harbor and

the rest of Harpswell is vulnerable due to potential spreading. The adelgid bugs can cause the decline of Eastern Hemlocks. Ms. Kanoti described the white looking egg sacs on the twigs and many key elements in identifying a hemlock which are available at <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/HemlockWoollyAdelgid.htm>. Ms. Kanoti encouraged the public to look at their own hemlocks and to help identify stands of forest hemlocks within Harpswell. Ladybug Beetles have been released in Harpswell in an attempt to control the adelgid bugs. Ms. Kanoti doesn't encourage the public to cut down hemlocks but instead to contact her if infestation is discovered. Ms. Kanoti noted that brown tail moth nest have not been surveyed in Harpswell this past winter.

9. Consider Dry Hydrant Easement with Arboretum Association, Cundy's Harbor: Administrator Eiane reported that Town Meeting gave the Board authority to accept an easement from Arboretum Association for a dry hydrant to assist the Fire Departments and there is no economic benefit to any party. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to accept the easement; motion passed 3-0.

10. Consider Discharging Certain Minor and Burdensome Personal Property Taxes: Chairman Henderson explained the Tax Office has tried to pursue unpaid personal property taxes with five separate entities, totaling \$367.97, to no avail. The Town has been unable, despite repeated efforts, to make contact with any of the five. State statute allows discharging uncollectable personal property taxes. Selectman Multer moved, seconded by Chairman Henderson to discharge the recommended taxes; motion passed 3-0.

11. Consider Contracting with InforME for Electronic Automobile and Boat Registration Processes: Administrator Eiane stated the Town is trying to offer more online services to taxpayers and that this automobile and boat re-registration process is another step. Deputy Administrator Sawyer explained the Town could offer boat re-registrations and automobile re-registrations through Informe that is currently the Town's credit card processor. Boat re-registrations can be offered online for payment by credit/debit cards and electronic checks with a 2% fee of the total transactions being passed onto the user. The Town will not receive the \$1.00 agent fee per transaction completed online which will cost the Town about \$225 if the estimated 15% of the taxpayers use the service. Automobile re-registrations (rapid renewal) can be offered for payment by electronic check only (if credit/debit cards are used, the Town would lose an additional 2% of excise tax) as the 2% fee cannot be passed onto the user per law at this time. The Town will not receive the \$3.00 agent fee per transaction completed online which will be about \$3,000. Furthermore, the Town would be required to purchase a rapid renewal module for the Town's accounting software to interface with the Rapid Renewal program at a one time chose of \$780 and a yearly fee of \$250. Although this cost of \$780 wasn't planned, staff will make every effort to cover it in the computer services line. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer to approve the staff recommendation for online boat (credit cards and electronic checks accepted) and rapid renewal (only electronic checks accepted) processes and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the necessary contracts; motion passed 3-0.

12. Accept Donation for the Harpswell Heating Assistance Program: Selectman Multer moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to accept the \$100 donation from the West Harpswell Baptist Church for the heating assistance program with thanks; motion passed 3-0.

13. Consider Correction to Previously Approved First Time Liquor License for Wood Landing Management Inc., DBA Harpswell Inn: Administrator Eiane explained the Board previously approved the first time liquor license for the Harpswell Inn but during the State's review, it was noted the applicant is a corporation. Since the application was approved under the Harpswell Inn, it is required to have local approval under the corporation's name. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to approve the liquor license for Wood Landing Management Inc., DBA Harpswell Inn; motion passed 3-0.

14. Old Business

- **Amendment to Interest Policy on Transfer Station Charges:** Deputy Administrator Sawyer explained this change is to clarify when interest would be charged on transfer station charges. The current process is to accumulate charges for a month and then send the bill out on the first of the next month with a due date of 'due upon receipt'. If the invoice is not paid by the next month's billing cycle, finance charges are assessed, at the same rate as for delinquent taxes, back to the due date, which is the billing date. When someone charges, they are given a slip at that time stating the amount of the charge and they may pay prior to the billing cycle if so desired. If preferred, the Board could change the due date from 'due upon receipt' to 'net 15 days'. The Board discussed different options. Selectman Multer moved, seconded by Chairman Henderson to adopt the amended policy (interest payable from billing date); motion passed 2-0 (Selectman Wallace abstained).
- **Deed of Gift Form:** Chairman Henderson suggested some additional changes. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to adopt the deed of gift form and letter; motion passed 3-0.

15. Other Business

- **Consider supporting water testing event:** Chairman Henderson suggested forwarding the concept of a public water quality testing day at the Town Office to the Conservation Commission for determination of action or not. Selectman Multer stated she was opposed to having the Town in any way promote private businesses. Selectman Wallace agreed with Selectman Multer. Chairman Henderson directed staff to respond to the individual who submitted the suggestion that the Board doesn't wish to undertake the testing as a Town even, as members of the Board don't want to sponsor a public relations event for a private entity..
- **Consider abandoned vessel action:** Deputy Administrator Sawyer explained that staff has been working to clean up the Town's properties at Mackerel Cove. A lot of abandoned items and debris, including floats, have been removed at the Town's expense. As part of this effort, the Board was asked to authorize sending a 30-day notice to an individual who has left his boat and float on the beach requiring him to remove the items within 30 days. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer to authorize the 30-day notice to Geoff Steinman; motion passed 3-0. The Board encouraged the public to take care of the property and discussed different options for enforcement. The Board may consider requiring floats to be registered.

16. Authorization of the Warrant: Selectman Wallace moved, seconded by Chairman Henderson to authorize warrant #34 in the amount of \$57,063.71; motion passed 3-0. Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Multer to authorize warrant #35 in the amount of \$3,648.71; motion passed 2-0 (Selectman Wallace abstained). Chairman Henderson moved, seconded by Selectman Wallace to authorize warrant #36 in an amount not to exceed \$1,157 to record liens; motion passed 3-0. Payroll warrant #23 in the amount of \$14,108.80 was noted for the record.

17. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri-Lynn Sawyer

Attachments:

[Attachments are available at the Town Clerk's Office or by email at harpswell@gwi.net]